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SUBJECT: MALAGASY AMBASSADOR MAKES PITCH FOR REINSTATEMENT  
OF RAVALOMANANA

¶1. Summary: Dr. Denis Andriamandroso Madagascar's Ambassador to South Africa met with Acting A/S Carter to make the case for reinstatement of former President Marc Ravalomanana. The Ambassador acknowledged that Ravalomanana had made mistakes in his handling of the demonstrations leading to his ouster and would be willing to hold new elections in the near term. He warned against danger of a solution imposed by the international community. Acting A/S Carter made clear that the United States does not believe reinstatement is feasible or desirable and that the best way to restore constitutional rule is for Ravalomanana and other interested parties, to engage in the UN-led process with a view to holding elections before the end of 2009. End Summary.

¶2. On April 29, Acting A/S Philip Carter met with Dr. Denis Andriamandroso Madagascar's Ambassador to South Africa and Jocelyn Radifera, Ambassador to the United States, at their request. Ambassador Andriamandroso had been sent to the United States by former President Ravalomanana to advocate on behalf of reinstatement. The Ambassador embarked on a lengthy discourse outlining the former president's economic development achievements and the imperative of respect for the constitution. He acknowledged that the former president had made mistakes in how he handled the voices of dissatisfaction and demonstrations in the months leading to his ouster. The bottom line was that Ambassador Andriamandroso was arguing for the United States to support reinstatement of Ravalomanana who would then be willing to have elections in near term. He said the resignation was an act taken in emergency circumstances and should not be seen as irreversible. He said it was wrong to put Rajoelina and Ravalomanana on equal footing in looking at the way forward as that would undermine respect for the constitution and simply empower those who may wish to destabilize the country in the future. He also emphasized the importance of listening to the people currently demonstrating and risking their lives in support of Ravalomanana and warned against danger of a solution imposed by the international community.

¶3. Acting A/S Carter made it clear that we do not see Rajoelina as a legitimate leader but also said reinstatement of Ravalomanana is a non-starter. He said we need to look beyond that to a process of reconciliation and free and fair elections. He outlined the USG position:  
-- Ravalomanana and TIM need to join the dialogue taking place under the auspices of the UN;  
-- the UN is natural focal point since it was there before during and after Ravalomanana resigned;  
-- the goal of the process should be organization of elections under auspices of an independent entity, probably the UN;  
-- we do not support changing the constitution before elections; a legitimate government needs to be in place before it is reviewed;  
-- no former president or Rajoelina should have any role in overseeing the election; the question of who will be able to contest it is a separate decision for the Malagasy to make (although given our view that existing constitution should be

basis of election, Rajoelina would be ruled out);  
-- elections need not necessarily begin with presidential  
elections; the country could conceivably start with  
parliamentary or other elections as a first step to new  
presidential elections.  
CLINTON